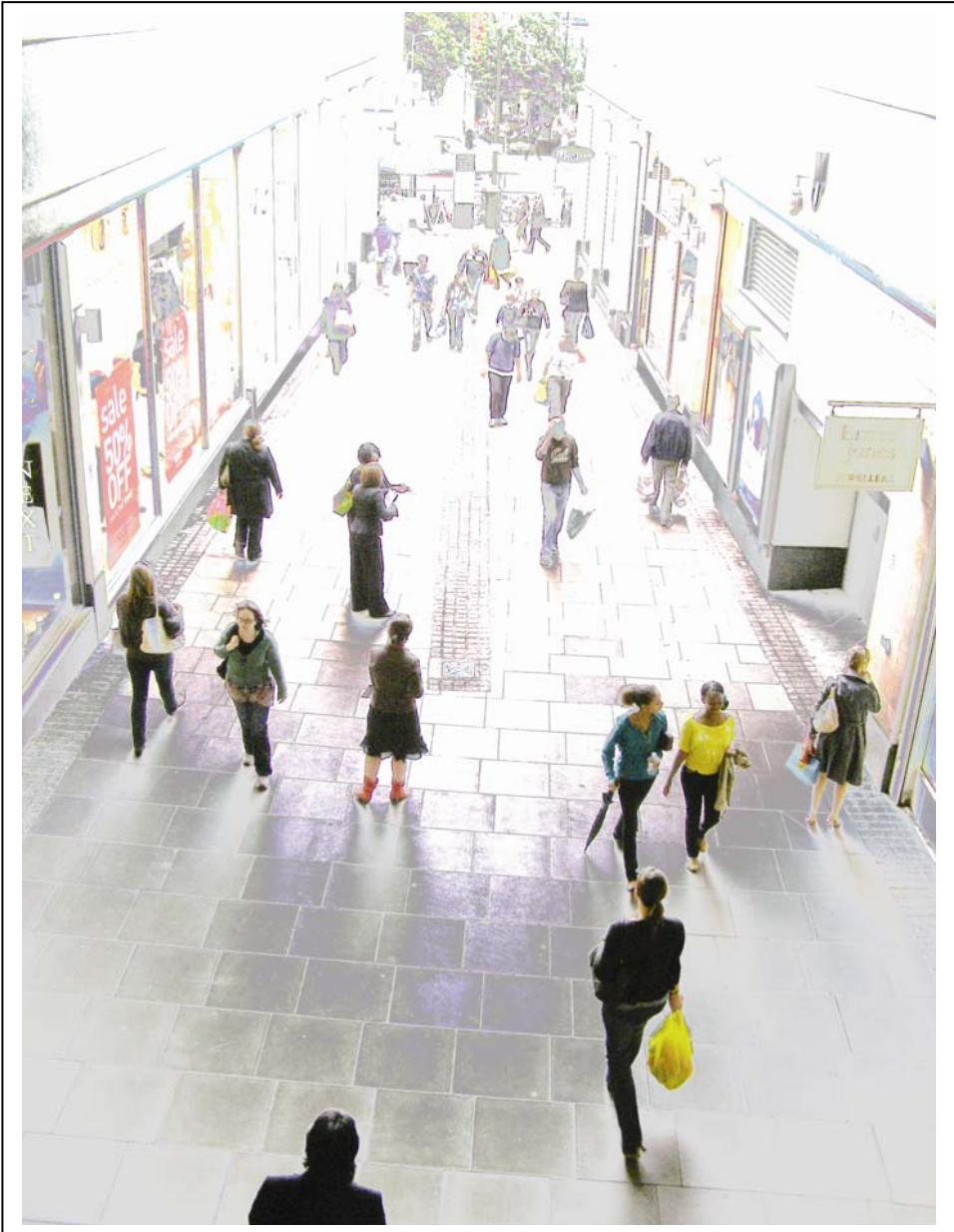




# Partners Diversity Plan 2009 – 10



## 1. Introduction

Our aims for equality and diversity and our vision for equality should be read in the context of the Partners mission, vision, and values shown opposite.

### Our Aims for Equalities and Diversity:

1. Ensure that everyone can access our services in a way that is appropriate to them
2. Encourage two-way communication between all stakeholders
3. Promote and encourage equality awareness

### Our vision for equality:

- Get to know our customers better
- Treat our tenants and leaseholders as individuals
- Meet our customers' needs
- Involve our residents in the way that enables them to be involved
- Break down barriers to accessing services
- Break down barriers to involvement in the decision making process
- Make sure that our sub contractors work to our diversity principles

### Linking to general service planning

Partners Diversity Plan is not standalone and our other planning process will deliver the following actions:

- ❑ **PFI 1 Best Value Improvement Plan** – engaging leaseholders, exploring the benefit of annual visits for vulnerable residents, gaining feedback from all of our residents, increase witness support in ASB cases, etc.
- ❑ **Annual Service Plan** - fun day for families, empowering staff, services accessed by older people and how we can improve that, make the repairs satisfaction system more accessible, continue to collect diversity data, Residents Forum elections, analyse effectiveness of Resident Involvement Packs, etc.

### Our Mission Statement

To improve homes and provide excellent services through partnership and innovation

### Our Strategic Aims

1. To work in partnership and innovate to provide excellent customer services
2. To improve and maintain homes
3. To manage our business efficiently and effectively
4. To develop our people

### Our Vision

To be considered excellent by our tenants and leaseholders

### Our Values

Excellence, Partnership, Innovation, Respect, Loyalty, Trust

## **2. Partners Diversity arrangements**

Partners Board delegates the leadership and management of diversity to Partners Managing Director, John Holman. Partners Diversity Group consists of staff representatives from each team and is chaired by Partners Head of Quality, Ed Butler. The Diversity Group produces and monitors Partners Diversity Plan. Partners Diversity Policy is at Appendix 2. Our contractual obligations on diversity are limited to having regard to Islington Council policy and statute, and Partners already does far more than this. Partners Residents Forum inputs into Partners Diversity Plan and then reviews performance against the plan.

## **3. Equality and Cohesion Charter for Islington**

Partners signed Islington Council's Equality & Cohesion Charter in 2008 (see Appendix 1).

## **4. Partners Customer Survey 2008**

From Partners Customer Survey conducted in 2008, two key questions were reviewed, namely overall satisfaction and opportunities to participate in Partners decision making process, to establish whether particular groups are more or less satisfied. The survey related to tenants only and is subject to max std error of + / - 3.1% at a confidence level of 95%. Therefore, attention should be directed toward + / - of 3.1% or more.

The group showing the largest minus rating from the bases is the group 'religion: none'. In terms of overall satisfaction it shows -8%, and in terms of opportunities to participate it is -11%.

The next largest differential is -5% on the overall question and -6% on opportunities to participate for wheelchair users. The samples base is 26 and 19 respectively and the accuracy of these statistics is therefore in doubt. The action plan includes actions to investigate whether there is any dissatisfaction in this group. The survey shows no 'minus' satisfaction issues for disabled tenants generally.

The survey shows that people representing families are -4% satisfied for the overall satisfaction question, and -6% satisfied from the base for opportunities to participate. Actions relating to engaging families are included in the action plan.

There is a smaller satisfaction issue based on tenants' age. Tenants aged between 35 – 54 years showed a -4% for overall satisfaction and a -5% was shown for 35 – 44 year old tenants for opportunities to participate. The survey shows no 'minus' satisfaction issues for the age group 16 – 34 years or any other age group.

For tenants who identify themselves as Black & Minority Ethnic, the statistics show between -1% to -2% in terms of satisfaction which is within confidence levels of 3.1%. However, ad hoc statistics show that some Asian tenants are less satisfied but sample numbers are in single figures and are therefore unreliable. The plan contains actions to investigate satisfaction within Asian community.

The survey shows no satisfaction issues based on tenants gender.

More diversity statistics are available at Appendix 3.

<b>Taking everything into account how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with services provided by Partners? (Base = 64%)</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>+ / -</b>	<b>Base</b>
16 – 34 years old	-3%	96
35 – 54 years old	-4%	364
Black & Minority Ethnic	-1%	353
Disabled	+ / - 0%	346
Wheelchair user	-5%	26
Religion: None	-8%	140
Female	+ / - 0%	551
Family	-4%	205

<b>Thinking about the housing services that Partners provide how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities for participation in management and decision making? (Base = 48%)</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>+ / -</b>	<b>Base</b>
16 – 34 years old	+ / - 0%	101
35 – 44 years old	-5%	141
Black & Minority Ethnic	-2%	263
Disabled	+4%	265
Wheelchair user	-6%	19
Religion: None	-11%	103
Female	+1%	412
Family	-6%	155

## 5. Data collection

The following tables show the level of diversity information showing in our computer system for the categories listed. We are putting a lot of effort into diversity data collection; our strategy is to direct mail our data collection form to leaseholders and to give every tenant a copy of the form at their annual gas safety inspection.

<b>PFI 1 Tenants</b>	<b>August 2007</b>	<b>July 2008</b>	<b>April 2009</b>
DOB / Age	96%	96%	96%
Sex	99%	99%	99%
Ethnic Origin	49%	50%	52%
National Language	34%	52%	53%
Disability	37%	47%	47%

<b>PFI 2 Tenants</b>	<b>August 2007</b>	<b>July 2008</b>	<b>April 2009</b>
DOB / Age	96%	97%	97%
Sex	99%	99%	99%
Ethnic Origin	52%	55%	55%
National Language	34%	56%	56%
Disability	35%	47%	47%

Partners has formally identified predominant languages for translation as: Turkish, Spanish, Somali, Greek, Bengali, Portuguese. Partners Tenant Handbook has already been translated into these 6 languages, although we usually translate on demand.

## **6. Resident Involvement**

A Resident Involvement Strategy is in place for 2009 – 11.

### ***a) The Residents Forum***

Partners Residents Forum is made up of tenants and leaseholders and is an important way for us to consult with our residents. The Forum meets every two months and residents can elect members every 2 years. The next elections will take place in spring 2009. There are currently 16 members on the forum, made up of 15 tenants and 1 leaseholder. Leaseholders are currently underrepresented on the forum and one of our aims is to increase our communication with leaseholders.

Members of the Forum represent the interests of other Partners residents by:

1. Representing residents' views in all aspects of our service, such as repairs and refurbishment works
2. Monitoring resident satisfaction and working with us to continually improve our services
3. Helping us communicate effectively with residents by contributing to our newsletter
4. Meeting regularly to discuss any problems our residents are experiencing
5. Representing Partners residents on consultation exercises by Islington Council and Homes For Islington

### ***b) Partners Involvement Register (PIR)***

To improve the way we consult with our residents, Partners has set up an involvement register which gives our residents the chance to get involved on the issues that are important to them, in a way that suits them. The register is open to all Partners tenants, leaseholders as well as family members or lodgers. The aim of the Involvement Register is to:

1. Develop a better relationship with our residents
2. Understand more what our residents want
3. Adapt our services and focus our resources to suit our residents' needs

A consultation plan 2009 / 10 has been developed for PIR.

### ***c) Residents newsletter 'Partners Gazette'***

Partners Gazette is our customer newsletter which is sent tenants and leaseholders 5 times a year to keep them informed of current issues, performance, competitions, awards, etc. Partners Gazette is a way to help residents understand how we work and an opportunity to highlight key areas where Partners will need residents' cooperation.

## **7. Partnerships**

We work in partnership with the following agencies:

- Dorcus Project
- Mary Ward Legal
- APNA GHAR
- Single Homeless Project
- Alcohol Recovery Project (ARP)
- Mosaic Floating Support
- Social Services
- CHAS
- CAB
- Essex Road Advice Project
- Independence Advice Project
- Epic Trust

Partners has adopted the Council's Harassment and Domestic Violence procedures and attends MAGPI (Multi Agency Geographical Panel in Islington).

Partners now works with Disability Action In Islington (DAII) on reviewing plans and documents. DAII have provided Partners Diversity Group with training on Disability issues and have attended our Residents Forum

## **8. Shaping services**

Partners shapes services for individuals and groups based on diversity and other data we have collected such as our Risk Register. Partners Involvement Register will also be used to shape Partners services and we will work in partnership with Partners Residents Forum to do this. Examples of shaping services includes: prioritising heating systems for over 70s, bringing forward refurbishments where new heating system are needed, decanting vulnerable residents so they don't have to cope with the refurbishment, making Partners website as accessible as possible, using Partners Gazette to respond to residents information needs, etc.

## **9. Diversity Action Plan**

Please see appendix 4.

## Appendix 1

### EQUALITY & COHESION CHARTER FOR ISLINGTON

We recognise, respect and value Islington's diverse community.

We shall promote good relationships between people of different backgrounds and lifestyles.

We are committed to creating a borough where individuals are free from poverty, ignorance and conformity and are empowered to take responsibility and make a positive contribution.

We are committed to identifying, understanding and responding to the different needs and experiences of our community, and in particular those of vulnerable individuals and communities represented within the "equality strands", like black and minority ethnic communities, asylum seekers and refugees, disabled people, older and young people, women faith communities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We acknowledge that individuals belong to more than one "group" and may have multiple identities and we shall take this into account in our work.

We shall work in partnership to ensure that there is equality of opportunity and access and people are free to live the way they choose, provided that there is no detriment to others or to the wider society.

We are committed to tackling discrimination and inequality in all the service areas for which we are responsible, including in our role as employers.

We are committed to targeting our efforts to secure equitable outcomes when implementing our part of Islington's Sustainable Community Strategy.

**Appendix 2  
Partners Equalities & Diversity Policy  
January 2009**



**Our Aims for Equalities and Diversity:**

1. Ensure that everyone can access our services in a way that is appropriate to their individual needs
2. Encourage two-way communication between all stakeholders
3. Promote and encourage equality awareness amongst our stakeholders

**How does diversity work at Partners?**

Partners Diversity Policy is agreed by Core Group and is delivered through Partners Diversity Group, which includes representatives from the Housing Management, Partnership, Repairs and Works teams. The Diversity Group consults Partners Residents Forum and other tenants and leaseholders when developing our annual Diversity Plan and on other issues.

**Partners does not discriminate against any person on the grounds of:**

race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or having AIDS.

**Partners Diversity Vision:**

We will involve customers and staff in our decision making process, and will treat everyone as individuals in making services accessible to all.

**Our Diversity Policy is for Partners tenants, leaseholders, and staff members.**

Staff should read it in conjunction with their employers Equal Opportunities Policy.

### Appendix 3 – Diversity Statistics

The following diversity information was gathered from the 812 tenants who responded to our customer survey:

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Tenants %</b>
White - British	53%
White - Irish	10%
White - Any other White background	5%
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	1%
Mixed - White and Black African	*%
Mixed - White and Asian	*%
Mixed - Any other mixed background	1%
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1%
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	*%
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	2%
Asian or Asian British - Any other Asian background	2%
Black or Black British - Caribbean	8%
Black or Black British - African	6%
Black or Black British - Any other Black background	1%
Chinese or Other - Chinese	2%

Greek  
Other  
Refused

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16 – 24 years	5%
25 – 34 years	7%
35 – 44 years	22%
45 – 54 years	23%
55 – 59 years	7%
60 – 64 years	11%
65 – 74 years	13%
75 – 84 years	8%
85+ years	2%
Not provided	4%

<b>Religion</b>	<b>Tenants %</b>
None	17%
Christian (all)	56%
Buddhist	1%
Hindu	-
Jewish	-
Muslim	*%
Other	8%
Not provided/prefer not to say	*%

<b>Religion</b>	<b>Tenants %</b>
Heterosexual	81%
Gay man	2%
Gay woman	1%
Bisexual	*%
Other	1%
Prefer not to say/not provided	15%

<b>Disability in household</b>	<b>Tenants %</b>
Yes	43%
No	57%
Prefer not to say	*%

<b>Wheelchair user in household</b>	<b>Tenants %</b>
Yes	3%
No	96%
Prefer not to say	*%

\*% means that the figure is less than 1%

## Appendix 4

Desired Outcome	Action	Measure of success	Deadline
1.1 Make Partners service accessible to all Partners tenants and leaseholders	Make the complaints process more accessible	We know who doesn't access the complaints procedure and have encouraged them to access it should they need to.	September 2009
	Better office signage	Partners has investigated using: signs on the pavement, lamppost signs, sandwich board.	September 2009
	Make office location maps more available to visitors	Office location maps put on the back of headed paper and on the website	June 2009
	Identify who is not accessing the service	Through surveys and other feedback mechanisms, identify which groups are not accessing services and analyse why	September 2009
	Improve our audio services for visually impaired residents.	There is an audio mechanism on Partners website. Partners Gazette is offered on audio.	March 2010
	Assess outreach (promote) home visits.	Explored by the Repairs Team	As 5 year plan
1.2 Improve customer satisfaction with Partners services	Put translated leaflets onto website	Partners leaflets available on website in the six different languages	September 2009
	Investigate reasons for dissatisfaction for the following groups and take action to improve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Religion: None</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Families</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Asian origin</li> </ul>	Reasons for dissatisfaction are identified and action planning identifies method to tackle	March 2010

<p>1.3 Customers know what service level they can expect</p>	<p>Publicise Partners Service Promise</p> <p>Develop more specific service standards and tell customers what they are</p>	<p>Service promise is publicised in Partners Gazette and on the website.</p> <p>Service standards developed and published through Partners Gazette and website</p>	<p>March 2010</p> <p>As 5 year plan</p>
<p>1.4 Improve partnership working</p>	<p>Improve sign posting to external agencies.</p>	<p>Partners adds value to its own services by improving accessibility to complementary services</p>	<p>March 2010</p>

<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Measure of success</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
2.1 Improve the perception of Partners complaints process amongst stakeholders	Improve the quality of stage 1 complaints letters	Meet with letter writers to clarify how complaints should be dealt with and monitor	June 2009
	Learn more from complaints	Ensure that 100% cover sheets are returned and feedback collated	August 2009
	Publicise complaints feedback	In staff and customer newsletters	As cases happen
	Publish to staff ombudsman successes	In staff newsletter	As cases happen
2.2 Provide diversity / disability guidance	Disability Action in Islington (DAII) session; agenda setting training session.	Organise DAII to facilitate agenda setting session for Diversity Group	August 2009
		Offer DAII training to Partners staff (subject to funding)	September 2009
2.3 Gain feedback from staff regarding Diversity	As part of the mini staff survey, ask:	<p><i>1. On a scale of 1-10 how interested are you in Equality and Diversity</i></p> <p><i>2. Would you like to be more involved?</i></p> <p><i>3. How would you like to be involved?</i></p>	June 2009
2.4 Improve communication with stakeholders	Produce communications in 'plain English'	Tenants and leaseholders understand key documents e.g. S20 Notices, tenancy agreement	March 2010
	Write a 'disability focused' articles in Partners Gazette; what we do for disabled residents and how they can	Articles are published in Partners Gazette	July 2009

	<p>access support.</p> <p>Improve basic information on who Partners are e.g. website, Partners Gazette, tenancy / income / leasehold patches, etc.</p> <p>Further improve our website e.g. offer more on demand services</p> <p>Involve leaseholders and tenants in communication, e.g. focus groups.</p> <p>Regular RLO checks on tenants during works; a more methodical work plan (room by room)</p> <p>Additional RLO visits and support. Offer interpreters and email communication.</p>	<p>Information is on <a href="http://www.partnersislinton.net">www.partnersislinton.net</a></p> <p>Information is on <a href="http://www.partnersislinton.net">www.partnersislinton.net</a></p> <p>PIR consultation plan is implemented</p> <p>Ask Works team if possible</p> <p>Ask Works team if possible</p>	<p>September 2009</p> <p>December 2009</p> <p>As consultation plan</p>
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<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Measure of success</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
3.1 Raise awareness of diversity issues	Customer care training programme	Set up for Housing Management, and assess demand thereafter.	April 2010
	Multi-faith calendars handed out to staff		January 2010
3.2 Identify good practice	Compare Equality & Diversity activity to other providers e.g. Hyde, HFI, etc.	Diversity Group feel more empowered	March 2010
3.3 Increase resources	Assess whether it is possible to gain funding to support Partners Diversity activity		March 2010
3.4 Inclusive working	Encourage staff to introduce themselves to new residents more – 'get to know you visits'	Visits take place by all teams, especially tenancy officers	March 2010
	Promote joined-up working between service areas & information sharing so that more staff are aware of Diversity issues	Joined up working takes place  (Partners service plan contains various actions relating to this area)	March 2010